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NO PLAN TO REMOVE 'SECULARISM', 'SOCIALISM' FROM PREAMBLE: GOVT

The Centre told the Rajya Sabha on Thursday it has "no plan or intention" to remove the words 'socialism' and 'secularism' from the Preamble

DEBATES IN PUBLIC CIRCLES ONLY: MEGHWAL

In a written reply, law minister Arjun Ram Meghwal said while there may be debates in public or political circles, "no formal decision has been announced by the government" regarding amendments to these terms. Last month, RSS general secretary Dattatreya Hosabale called for a national debate on whether the two terms should remain in the Preamble

DHANKHAR CALLED THEM 'FESTERING WOUND'

- Hosabale's comments had kicked off a political row. Wading into the controversy created by Hosabale, then Vice-President Jagdeep Dhankhar had said the added words were a "festering wound"
- The Supreme Court last year had said "socialism" does not impede private sector growth, while "secularism" is integral to basic structure

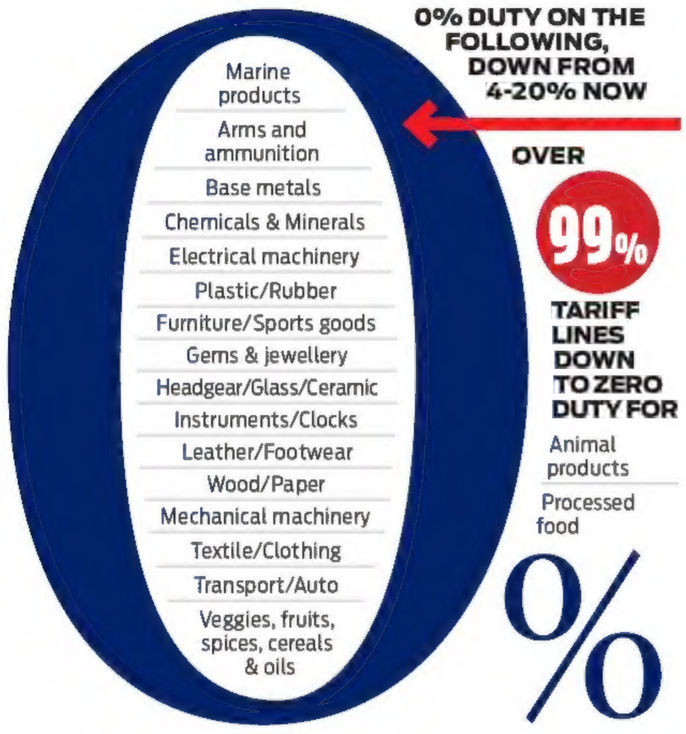
42nd

CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT IN 1976 INTRODUCED SOCIALISM, SECULARISM

CHENNAI ▪ MADURAI ▪ VIJAYAWADA ▪ BENGALURU ▪ KOCHI ▪ HYDERABAD ▪ VISAKHAPATNAM ▪ COIMBATORE ▪ KOZHIKODE ▪ THIRUVANANTHAPURAM ▪ BELAGAVI ▪ BHUBANESWAR ▪ SHIVAMOGGA ▪ MANGALURU ▪ TIRUPATI ▪ TIRUCHY ▪ TIRUNELVELI ▪ SAMBALPUR ▪ HUBBALLI ▪ DHARMAPURI ▪ KOTTAYAM ▪ KANNUR ▪ VILLUPURAM ▪ KOLLAM ▪ TADEPALLIGUDEM ▪ NAGAPATTINAM ▪ THRISSUR ▪ KALABURAGI

Landmark free trade deal with UK signed in the presence of PMs Modi and Starmer slashes most tariff lines to zilch

THE POWER OF ZERO



BIG TAKEAWAYS

- Indian farmers to get preferential access to UK's $37.5 billion agriculture market
- Sensitive Indian sectors like dairy, vegetables, apples, cooking oils, oats fully protected under the deal
- Big catch for Indian fishermen as the $5.4 billion British market opens for marine exports with zero duty as against up to 20% now
- Big boost for UK job creation as labour-intensive sectors get competitive edge
- Zero duty on major sectors
- Massive gain for rural India and exporters with zero duty on processed foods as against up to 70% earlier
- 75,000 Indian workers in UK will benefit from Double Contribution Convention, as it exempts workers from social security contribution for three years
- Professionals to get better mobility access to the UK. Up to 1,800 Indian chefs, yoga instructors and classical musicians can move temporarily to Britain to provide services

JAYANTH JACOB @ New Delhi

INDIA and the UK signed a landmark Free Trade Agreement (FTA) on Thursday during Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to London, sealing the most significant trade pact for Britain since Brexit and marking a major breakthrough in India's global trade strategy. The deal, finalised after three years of stop-start negotiations, cuts tariffs on key goods like textiles, whisky, automobiles, and electronics, and is expected to double the current bilateral trade of 56 billion by 2030.

Negotiated amid shifting global trade dynamics and rising protectionism, the India–UK Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA) opens up one of the world's fastest-growing markets to UK firms while giving Indian exporters critical access to one of the G7's leading economies. The agreement is set to take effect after a formal ratification process in the UK, likely within a year or less.

"This is a new chapter in the India–UK economic partnership," said Prime Minister Narendra Modi. "CETA reflects our shared commitment to enhancing trade, driving inclusive growth, and creating opportunities for farmers, MSMEs, women, youth, and professionals," Modi said at Chequers, his British counterpart Keir Starmer's countryside residence 50 km northwest of London.

For India, the deal delivers duty-free access on 99% of its exports, spanning labour-intensive sectors such as apparel, marine products, footwear, and engineering goods. High-growth sectors like electronics, chemicals, and auto components are poised for major export gains. In return, India will slash tariffs on 90% of UK goods. The average tariff on UK exports will drop from 15% to 3%.

The UK, facing slower post-Brexit trade momentum, has touted the deal as its biggest trade success since leaving the EU. "This is the biggest and most economically significant trade deal the UK has made since Brexit," British PM Keir Starmer said. "Our landmark trade deal with India is a major win for Britain. It will create thousands of British jobs across the UK, unlock new opportunities for businesses and drive growth in every corner of the country, delivering on our Plan for Change," he said.

Scotch whisky tariffs will be halved from 150% to 75%, and will fall further to 40% over 10 years. Auto tariffs will be phased down to 10%, while Indian EVs will gain access to the UK under a quota system. The deal enhances cooperation in services, clean energy, and finance. UK firms will gain locked-in access to insurance and financial sectors, while British clean energy companies will enter India's public procurement market.

While the economic gain for the UK of an estimated 6.51 billion USD boost by 2040 is modest relative to losses from exiting the EU, the deal signals Britain's pivot toward the Indo-Pacific. The pact indicates India's growing leverage in shaping fairer, balanced trade terms with developed economies.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi with his UK counterpart Keir Starmer | PTI

Modi, Starmer rap democratic space abuse by Khalistanis

JAYANTH JACOB @ New Delhi

INDIA and the United Kingdom on Thursday sent a strong, united message against terrorism, with both Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his British counterpart Keir Starmer agreeing that there can be no double standards in tackling extremism. Following a bilateral meeting at the Chequers Estate, Modi thanked Starmer for the UK's strong condemnation of the April terrorist attack in J&K's Pahalgam that had claimed 26 lives.

"We are united in our view that there can be no place for double standards in the fight against terrorism," Modi said. "We also agree that forces with extremist ideologies must not be allowed to misuse democratic freedoms. Those who misuse democratic freedoms to undermine democracy itself must be held to account."

The statement is also seen as a veiled reference to pro-Khalistani activities abroad, amid growing Indian concern over threats to Indian diplomats and missions in the UK. Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri later said that India had raised the issue during the bilateral talks. Both sides reaffirmed commitment to enhancing cooperation between their security agencies, including on extradition of economic offenders, a long-standing demand from India involving several high-profile fugitives residing in the UK.

They also discussed regional and global challenges.

D'Cunha panel recommends action against RCB, KSCA, cops

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @Bengaluru

THE State Cabinet on Thursday accepted Justice Michael D'Cunha Commission report that recommended legal action against Royal Challengers Sports Private Limited (RCSPL)/RCB, DNA Entertainment Networks Private Limited and the Karnataka State Cricket Association (KSCA) and departmental inquiry against government officials, including the then Bengaluru Police Commissioner B Dayanand, and others.

The report, however, gave a clean chit to the government that allowed the celebrations.

Speaking to reporters, Law Minister HK Patil said the report was discussed and accepted in the Cabinet.

The Commission has recommended criminal and civil action against RCB, KSCA, DNA and government officials. Direction will be given to the Home Department for departmental inquiry against senior police officers, the minister said.

Asked if the report mentions or makes any recommendations against Dy CM DK Shivakumar, who attended the celebrations at the stadium, or has been there been any mention of the government's involvement or tweet by the CM's office, the minister said he has not seen the report.

The commission report stated: "The organisers were duty bound to obtain prior permission by submitting an application in the prescribed format at least seven days in advance of the proposed event, furnishing the details like venue, number of attendees, anticipated vehicular traffic and other details, but organisers failed to obtain the required permission and licence."

Though the government received severe criticism for mismanagement, the report blamed only senior police officials for their failure to stop the event knowing fully well that the event was unauthorised and was organised in-haste without proper security. P4

File Photo

DNA moves HC against 'fault-finding' report

Moving the Karnataka High Court seeking quashing of the report, DNA Entertainment Networks said the Commission acted as if it was a fault-finding commission rather than a fact-finding one.

STADIUM stampede

FOOT BROKEN BUT NOT HEART, PANT BATS AGAIN

FIROZ MIRZA @ Manchester

ON Wednesday, Rishabh Pant had to be driven off the field on a yellow ambulance (a makeshift buggy). His right foot, just below the small toe was swollen and blood was dripping from the wound. He was grimacing in pain both body and mind.

On Thursay, what seemed inevitable trickled in, the news of Pant; he has broken his right foot and will be out of the England Test series. Later, pictures of him with moonboot on his right foot went viral and everyone thought he would no longer be a part of fourth Test. Pant was an embodiment of stoic human resistance. The entire Old Trafford stadium rose when he wobbled down the stairs of the pavilion to bat. For a man who has endured the most harrowing of life's pain, a near-fatal car crash end of 2022, this injury seemed bearable. Pant the fighter would not have missed the opportunity to bat and add few more runs.

Unbeaten on 37 off 48, Pant faced seven balls adding two runs to his overnight total and ran three for his partner Washington Sundar before light drizzle forced an early lunch. India, however, lost two quick wickets to be reduced to 337/8 when Pant decided to open his arms and collect as many boundaries as he can. Incidentally, Pant had injured his left index finger during the Lord's match. India lost two wickets after lunch when Pant decided to open his arms. He first smashed Jofra Archer to over midwicket for a six to equal Virender Sehwag's record of 91 sixes — the most by an Indian in Tests. Pant then drove England captain Ben Stokes' full delivery to covers for a four completing his half-century. P17

Rishabh Pant bats with factured foot in 4th Test on Thursday | AP

Door glitch: Biz class in AI SF-BLR flight blanked out

S LALITHA @ New Delhi

AIR India's Boeing 777 flight from San Francisco to Bengaluru via Kolkata turned into a nightmare for nearly 160 flyers aboard on July 21, sources said. It took off eight hours behind schedule due to an inoperative main door in the Business Class section.

The crew were allegedly repeatedly misinforming the passengers that the aircraft was undergoing cleaning all this time.

The Business and Premier Economy sections were cordoned off with tapes before the flight took off by 5.45 am on July 22, passengers on board told this reporter.

Sources said five flyers in the Business Class refused to travel by economy and were left behind, while 25 others were moved to economy class.

A passenger on board, Sangeetha Krishnan (name changed on request) travelling with her three young children, told this reporter, "The flight from SFO to India is generally packed this time, and we booked our tickets eight months ago in Economy Class, which cost Rs 75,000 per ticket.

Our departure time was 9:00 pm US time on July 21. We were alerted that it would leave by 11 pm, then by 12 am, but the departure time kept getting delayed. The only response the staff at the gate kept giving repeatedly was that the cleaning of the aircraft was getting delayed," she said. P7

EXPRESS READ

4-year-old girl raped in Bidar school

Bidar: A four-year-old girl was allegedly raped in a private nursery school in Bidar city. In her complaint to the Women's Police Station on Thursday, the child's mother claimed that her daughter may have been raped between 9am and 2pm on Wednesday by someone in school | P7

K'taka shines in PM Vishwakarma Yojana

Mangaluru: Karnataka has stood out as one of the top-performing states in the PM Vishwakarma Yojana, aimed at empowering artisans and craftspeople. Karnataka received the highest number of applications and recorded 5,71,637 registrations | P4

DKS says K'taka will start Mahadayi work

Bengaluru: Lashing out at Goa CM Pramod Sawant for his statement that the Union Environment Ministry would not give permission for Karnataka's Mahadayi project, Dy CM DK Shivakumar said, "We will start the work. I will see who stops it" | P7

WITH THIS ISSUE

CITY'S BEST WEEKEND GUIDE INDULGE 42 PAGES, INCLUDING 24 OF INDULGE (TABLOID)

7/11 Mumbai blasts: SC stays HC verdict

SUCHITRA KALYAN MOHANTY @ New Delhi

THE Supreme Court on Thursday stayed the Bombay high court verdict of July 21 acquitting all 12 accused in the 2006 Mumbai train bomb blasts case, but said they need not return to jail.

A two-judge bench of Justices M M Sundresh and N Kotiswar Singh issued notice to all the accused in the case and sought their responses on the appeal filed by Maharashtra challenging the Bombay HC judgment.

During a brief hearing, Solicitor General Tushar Mehta, appearing for Maharashtra, requested the court for a stay of the judgment, citing that some observations made by the high court in its verdict of July 21 can impact other pending trials under the MCOCA.

Mehta also clarified that he was not seeking an order from the court to direct the accused, who were released from prison following the ruling, to surrender.

The bench said it had been informed that all respondents have been released and there was no question of bringing them back to the prison. "Taking note of submissions made by the SG on the question of law, we are inclined to hold that the impugned judgment shall not be treated as a precedent. To that extent, there is a stay of the judgment," said the court.

On July 21, a special bench of the Bombay high court of Justices Anil Kilor and Shyam Chandak acquitted all the 12 accused, saying the prosecution utterly failed to prove the case and it was "hard to believe the accused committed the crime". The Maharashtra government on July 22 knocked the doors of the Supreme Court challenging the verdict.

BUZZ KILL

Licence fee hike, liquor prices, rentals take the fizz out of Pub City

BALA CHAUHAN @ Bengaluru

THERE is a gradual decline in the number of watering holes in Pub City, especially in the past six months. Sources in the Food & Beverage (F&B) industry told *TNIE* that a 50 per cent hike in Excise licence fee, cut in corporate spending and insecurity regarding jobs have left telltale signs in falling footfalls and winding up of some liquor outlets. "In the last six months, around 50-60 pubs and bars in the city have either shut shop or exchanged hands," said Chethan Hegde, National Restaurants' Association of India (NRAI), Bengaluru chapter head, and owner of '1522', a prominent chain of pubs in the city, "Hike in licence fee, manpower and rentals, along with escalation in liquor prices in the last couple of years has adversely impacted F&B business in the city," he added.

"Bengalureans are grounded and smart spenders. Increase in liquor prices is impacting people, who love to dine out. They have cut down on the number of occasions they would go out to dine. It is liquor which spirals up the restaurant bill and people are being careful. Many have home bars. Instead of drilling a hole in their wallet to dine out, they would rather call in food from outside and relax with friends at home, at a much lesser cost and for a longer time, with no added headache of navigating through traffic and parking woes," said another pub owner.

The owner of a popular microbrewery said that with a 50 per cent increase in Excise licence fee, some microbreweries in the city may not find it feasible to renew their licences.

"It is becoming difficult to do business. The annual CL-9 licence (pubs & bars), which was earlier around Rs 9lakh is now Rs 14lakh. Rentals in Bengaluru have gone through the roof and so has manpower cost. It is not easy to sustain business because the burden is passed down to the guests, who are feeling the pinch. Additionally, rain is a spoiler. We are seeing a dip in footfall in pubs and bars," the owner said. P2